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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Atty. Docket: NIWA=9

|                            |   |                   |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------|
| In re Application of:      | ) | Conf. No.: 7527   |
|                            | ) |                   |
| Takahiro NIWA et. al.      | ) | Art Unit: 1771    |
|                            | ) |                   |
| Appln. No.: 09/915,568     | ) | Examiner:         |
|                            | ) |                   |
| Date Filed or 102(e) date: | ) |                   |
| July 27, 2001              | ) | Washington, D.C.  |
|                            | ) |                   |
| For: SLIDING MATERIAL      | ) | September 3, 2003 |

SECOND REQUEST FOR STATUS

Honorable Commissioner for Patents  
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office  
2011 South Clark Place  
Crystal Plaza Two, Lobby, Room 1B03  
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Sir:

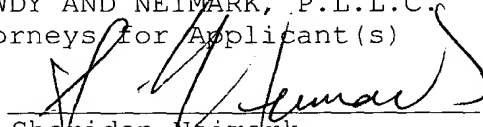
As more than 26 months have passed since this application was filed or entered into the United States National Stage and no office action has yet been received, the applicants hereby respectfully make inquiry as to the status of the above-identified application.

As 37 CFR 1.2 states that the action of the PTO "will be based exclusively on the written record", applicant needs and therefore **requests a written reply**.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attorneys for Applicant(s)

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